

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to any paper(s) indicated above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 4-14 were pending, under consideration and subjected to examination in the Office Action. Appropriate claims have been amended, canceled and/or added (without prejudice or disclaimer) in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. That is, such changes are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment and are simply refocused claims in which Applicant is present interested. At entry of this paper, Claims 1 and 4-17 will be pending for further consideration and examination in the application.

NON-REWRITTEN ALLOWABLE CLAIMS

Although claims 9, 11 and 13 have been indicated as being allowable if rewritten, as indicated within the "Allowable Subject Matter" section on page 5 of the Office Action, rewriting has not yet been effected as it is believed that any base and intervening claims will be allowed responsive to this paper. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to rewrite the potentially allowable claims at a later time if necessary, and Applicant and the undersigned respectfully thank the Examiner for such indication of potentially allowable subject matter.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC '103

The 35 USC '103 rejection of claims 1, 4-8, 10, 12 and 14 as being unpatentable over Matsumoto et al. (U.S. Patent 5,796,428) in view of Sasaki et al. (U.S. Patent 6,081,251) is respectfully traversed. However, such rejections have been rendered obsolete by the present clarifying amendments to Applicant's claims, and accordingly, traversal arguments are not appropriate at this time. However, Applicant respectfully submits the following to preclude renewal of any such rejections against Applicant's clarified claims.

All descriptions of Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention, and all descriptions and rebuttal arguments regarding the applied prior art, as previously submitted by Applicant in any form, are repeated and incorporated hereat by reference. Further, all Office Action statements regarding the prior art rejections are respectfully traversed. As additional arguments, Applicant respectfully submits the following.

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As argued in Applicant's prior papers, Applicant's "still picture GROUP management information" is "provided SEPARATELY from any STILL PICTURE management information containing management information for EACH STILL PICTURE". See Applicant's "VOB map" 6 (group info) in comparison to "VOB File" 11 (still picture info) in Applicant's FIG. 1, reproduced herewith for convenience.

Applicant's claimed "still picture group management information" includes Applicant's claimed "a data area for storing time data which specifies a first recording time at which the still picture data of an earliest-photographed still picture in said still picture group was recorded first by a picture-taking device, and a last recording time at which the still picture data of a latest-photographed still picture in said still picture group was recorded last by the picture-taking device". See FIG. 1's "First Recording Time (F_RECTM)" 7 and "Last Recording Time (L_RECTM)" 8 areas. (See also, added dependent claims 15-17.)

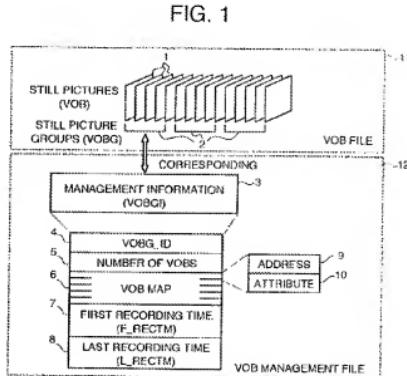


FIG. 11

Turning now to rebuttal of the previously applied prior art, Matsumoto et al. (assigned to the same Assignee as the present application) is deficient as a primary reference, in that Matsumoto et al. nowhere discloses or suggests any "still picture GROUP management information" (containing Applicant's claimed "a first recording time ...and a last recording time") "provided SEPARATELY from any STILL PICTURE management information containing management information for EACH STILL PICTURE". That is, in each of Matsumoto et

al.'s embodiments and illustrations (e.g., FIGS. 11 and 28 reproduced herewith for convenience), Matsumoto et al.'s picture date/time is intermingled with (i.e., NOT PROVIDED SEPARATELY FROM) "any STILL PICTURE management information containing management information for EACH STILL PICTURE", and/or does not show both a "a first recording time ...and a last recording time" for a group of pictures.

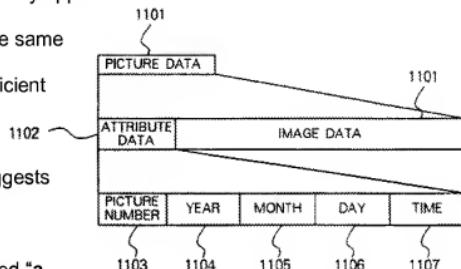


FIG. 28

PICTURE NUMBER	SHOOTING YEAR	SHOOTING MONTH	SHOOTING DAY	SHOOTING TIME	SHOOTING ATTITUDE
01	92	12	21	1344	0
02	92	12	24	2132	0
03	92	12	24	2150	0
04	92	12	24	2210	90
05	92	12	25	0753	0
06	92	12	26	0926	0
07	93	01	01	0534	0
08	93	01	01	0627	90
09	93	01	01	1009	0
10	93	01	01	1013	0
11	93	01	02	1326	0
12	93	01	02	1342	0
13	93	01	02	1447	0
14	93	01	13	1022	0
15	93	01	13	1635	270
16	93	01	13	1922	0
17	93	01	14	0655	0
18	93	01	14	1042	0
19	93	01	14	1155	90
20	93	01	14	1331	0
21	93	01	14	1911	90
22	93	01	14	2033	0
23	93	01	15	1125	0
24	93	01	15	1356	0
25	93	02	05	1013	0
26	93	02	06	0632	0

Sasaki et al., does not cure the major deficiency mentioned above with respect to the primary reference. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the previously-applied references (whether taken individually, or in combination) would not have disclosed or suggested Applicant's claimed invention.

In addition to the foregoing, the following additional remarks from Applicant's foreign representative are also submitted in support of traversal of the rejection and patentability of Applicant's claims.

Matsumoto does not disclose a specific separated data area for storing and specifying a first recording time and a last recording time in the still pictures in a still picture group. Matsumoto discloses, in Fig. 11, attribute data area 1102 in which time data of all picture data is stored. However, the attribute data area 1102 does not identify which is the first recording time and which is the last recording time in all of the pictures. If a user or the system wants to know the first recording time and the last recording time of the still pictures in the picture data, retrieval of all of the attribute data for all pictures to find out the earliest recording time and the latest recording time from among the all data is required.

In contrast, according to Applicant's present invention, a still picture group management information has a data area (7, 8) dedicated for storing time data which specifies a first recording time and a last recording time. It is very easy and fast to identify the first and last recording time of the still pictures in the still picture group by accessing to the data area (7, 8). The retrieving of all data is unnecessary.

Sasaki et al. likewise does not disclose a separate data area for storing time data which specifies a first recording time and a last recording time.

As a result of all of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art (taken alone and in the Office Action combinations) would not support a '103 obviousness-type rejection of Applicant's claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of such '103 rejection, and express written allowance of all of the '103 rejected claims, are respectfully requested.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is herein invited to telephone the undersigned attorneys at the local Washington. D.C. area telephone number of 703/312-6600 for discussing any Examiner's Amendments or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all

rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, i.e., Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR '1.136. Authorization is herein given to charge any shortage in the fees, including extension of time fees and excess claim fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 500.37453CX2) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Based upon all of the foregoing, allowance of all presently-pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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